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These cost the same as the current issue.

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I'll be only too pleased to read your letters, but if you want a personal reply, please enclose a stamped addressed envelope. If you don't want your letter printed in this magazine you must write 'NOT FOR PUBLICATION' on the top.

CONTRIBUTIONS

These are always welcome, and keep the magazine going! I'd prefer your articles typed with a small margin (but hand-written ones are also welcome!). Make sure the ink is as dark as possible, so the text will photocopy clearly. You may like to send me a drawing or a cartoon too.

FORMAT

This is an amateur magazine printed on an irregular basis as a non-profit hobby.

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This magazine is (C) Christopher Hester (Editor) 1992, except for items credited to another author who retains full copyright on their material, and are free to use it elsewhere.

PRODUCTION

I, the Editor, design the whole magazine and paste up the artwork. Mandy Rodrigues of 'Adventure Probe' then photocopies it with the help of her husband.

FINALLY...

Thank you for seeking out this magazine and for taking the time to read it.

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Editorial

Welcome to the eighteenth issue of 'Adventure Coder'! Did you realize that July marks our second birthday? Issue One was bravely released way back in July 1989! Older readers may remember that at one point, I considered splitting the magazine into four separate ones - for each of the major 8-bit computers! It seemed like a good idea until I came to draft the first issues - they were nearly all the same! So I kept with the original multi-system plan. However, I was also planning an 'ST Coder' and an 'Amiga Coder' (but not a 'PC Coder' alas!). I even advertised in 'Confidential' using the 'ST Adventure Coder' name, but no-one was interested! After that I deemed the best idea was to keep 'Coder' for 8-bit computers only, like the Amstrad, the Spectrum and the Commodore 64, but others like the SAM Coupe and the BBC Micro were welcome too. I then set about creating a new magazine 'Adventure Workshop', which was the opposite of 'Coder', catering only for 16-bit computers. That meant the Amiga, the Atari ST, and the PC machines. To keep from going insane, I now alternate between these two magazines - that's why both have become bi-monthly!

At the start of this year, it looked though like 'Coder' was doomed. Then Stephen Groves came to the rescue - read Part II of his smashing adventure creator series in this issue - and since the last 'Coder', other readers have also been kind enough to supply enough material to last for this and the next two issues, but only just! I still need MANY MORE articles and listings, please! I must thank Steve Clay and Ian Eveleigh this time, for it is they who supplied me with several pieces of great material!

You might think 'Coder' hasn't really changed much since its first issue. Well I'm hoping to completely update my entire computer system soon, after resisting it for so long! The result could be very impressive indeed, especially if I can get to grips with a decent Desk Top Publishing program!

As for this issue, you'll have noticed one huge improvement already - your FREE tape! If the 'glossy' magazines can do it, SO CAN 'CODER'! On the tape is a complete adventure game - not a demo! I'm eternally grateful to (that man again!) Stephen Groves for making this possible. Who knows, there might be other goodies in future issues!

Yours editorially,

Clive

Christopher Hester.



YOUR LETTERS

Write to...

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GETTING BY

From Stephen Groves, Walsall, who is replying about the Editorial in the last issue concerning the cover, illustrating the threat of a rift between married couples over the use of the home computer.

Your comments about the cover are thought provoking, I know my wife can't (or won't) understand my love of computing. Having said that, it doesn't cause animosity. I think it all comes down to seeing the other person's point of view. I try not to spend all my spare time at the keyboard, and Christine understands when I do come upstairs and lock myself away. I usually avoid evenings on the computer and try to restrict myself to only one day at the weekend. It doesn't always work out that way (decorating etc) but we always seem to get by.

LIVING IN THE PAST?

From Ev, Leeds.

Smart Editorial (a couple of bits stand out in particular!) Neat letters, although why Phil Glover bought a SAM is beyond me! Living in the past or what? It was OBVIOUSLY doomed from Day 1.

'Head's Cases' - oh god. And Steve Groves' bit. Horra whopper! Smart stuff, though.

I love the "Baby on Board" cartoons, too! V.Clever.

Er... yeah. Thanks for that critique, Ev! (I didn't make it up - honest! Ed)

SAM CLUB NEWS

From Phil Glover, Birmingham.

As you may have read here and there, I'm helping to run the SAM ADVENTURE CLUB at the moment. It may seem rather premature, as we only have one Sam-specific adventure available, 'Five On A Treasure Island'. However, I know of another one or two being written from scratch in BASIC, and maybe even one in machine code (gasp!).

The big news of the last couple of weeks, is that an adventure creator is well under the way for Sam, and we'll be publishing some details on our next disk. It'll take several months to complete, but already sounds powerful and versatile.

Our membership is almost forty, and we've already produced two issues of our disk magazine, each over 750K in size, so you can see that things are going very well for us.

I don't know if you've seen a Sam loaded up with some of the excellent software now, and with some hardware, but it's proving to be every bit as good as many of us hoped. I have a 512K Sam with 1024K upgrade, twin 3.5" drives, printer, mouse,

stereo amp and speakers attached, two joysticks, motherboard with clock and a cassette, all connected at the same time. Eat your heart out, Spectrum! And no edge connector wobble! What with all of this, and a good keyboard, I think some great adventures may be written for Sam. It can run most 48K Speccy games (using an emulator!) and now it's capable of running CP/M 2.2 games, so we've plenty to keep us all busy until real Sam-specific adventures start being published.

COMPUTER SOCIALIZING

from Ian Eveleigh, Grantham.

Chris asked in his last editorial whether he thought computers were anti-social or not. Well, I just couldn't resist the opportunity to voice my opinion.

I don't know about you, but personally I don't like people to know I'm 'into' computers. Nothing on Earth (with the exception of 2 Unlimited) makes me cringe more than when I pop down the local for a few Tizers (*are you serious!?* - Ed) with some friends and I get introduced as, "This is Ian. He KNOWS about computers." ARRRGH!!! Well that does it! This person has obviously already stereotyped me and put me in the "computer user: Avoid!" pigeon hole. So then I have to work doubly hard to prove that I am, in fact, "normal", and do not want to enter into a discussion about how big the number on my PC is.

The truth is that I never talk about computers in the pub. It is the number one guaranteed way to become a social reject! And there are always several people in the group who find the subject of computers mindnumbingly tedious (or a par with discussing how many I.P. points your new R.P.G. dwarf has. (Whatever that means! - I never did find out and don't care.))

The problem is, if you look in that "computer user" pigeon hole for a specification sheet you will find (whether true or not!) it lists the following characteristics: long greasy hair, spots, NHS glasses, leather jacket, Iron Maiden T-shirt and dark blue jeans (with creases!). (Those over 30 can replace the T-shirt and jacket with an un-ironed shirt and a safe jumper.)

As a result of this it was an incredibly long time before I told even some of the closest people around me about my minor fame due to my 'Sherlock Holmes' adventure. Hell, it was three months before I even told my girlfriend! I waited for favourable reviews to appear so I couldn't be classed as a grade-A sado. I'm sure half my friends still don't know! (I told one the other day and he doesn't believe me!)

However, on the plus side, I can quite honestly say I have made... er, very few friends through computers! Ok, so there are a few notable exceptions - you'll know who you are! But, interestingly, I very rarely discuss computers with any of these people!

I think the major problem with computers is that they are a very solitary hobby, requiring (like Harold Dixon said) many hours (too many?) spent slaving away in front of a terminal - not really leaving enough time to socialize. And there's always that most anti-social of moments when you really should be doing something more important, but you are determined to fix this one bug if it takes you till 3am (and it usually does!).

To my eyes, the only real place for 'computer socializing' is through a medium like 'Adventure Coder'. What do you think? (Now's your chance to socialize!!)

Many thanks for that letter, Ian, it was exactly the sort of response I was hoping for! I suppose it would be pushing it for the debate to carry on with someone else's views in the next issue?



Ian also sent in his own list of favourite records, like mine from the last issue. Compare!

Best Albums Of 1991:

1. T'PAU: 'The Promise'. "...this album has given me more enjoyment than any other this year! ...it's pop music without being incredibly bland or recycled. What a mega, mega album!"
2. MARILLION: 'Holidays In Eden'. "I've listened to this no end. Stacks of brilliant tracks with fantastic lyrics."
3. SEAL: 'Seal'. "A fantastic album packed with brilliant tunes. Incredibly good for a debut album."
4. YES: 'Union'. *(Yeah!! - Ed)* "Just brill, if a tad confused towards the end."
5. PUBLIC ENEMY: 'Apocalypse '91'. "A brilliant album full of original and non-tedious sounds and beats. Every track seems to belong there with no 'fillers'."
6. REM: 'Out Of Time'.
7. ICE CUBE: 'Death Certificate'.
8. JON & VANGELIS: 'Page Of Life'.

I like it! Ian then added what he thought were the best TRACKS of '91...

1. YES: 'The More We Live - Let Go'. "I just LURVE this. An amazing sound that fills the room."
2. T'PAU: 'Purity'. "What a mega ballad. ...it really worked incredibly well."
3. MARILLION: 'No One Can'.
4. GENESIS: 'I Can't Dance'. "So unexpected and original. Dead catchy too."
5. ANTHRAX + PUBLIC ENEMY: 'Bring The Noise'. "So noisy... the two styles mix amazingly well."
6. SEAL: 'Killer'. "(The album version.) MEGA, MEGA, MEGA!"
7. SUBSONIC 2: 'Unsung Heroes Of Hip-Hop'. "The bass line of the year award. How the hell this didn't reach the charts I'll never know."
8. U2: 'The Fly'. "Unexpected, weird, noisy, excellent!"
9. R.E.M.: 'Shiny Happy People'.
10. ICE CUBE: 'Givin' Up The Nappy Dug Out'

Another great selection there, Ian, but why is 'The Fly' so far down?

TARTAN IN AMSTRAD PAW SHOCK!

from Tom Frost of Tartan Software, Angus, who is writing after reading Issue 13 of 'Adventure Coder' again recently...

I read it all again and this time I was most intrigued by the article entitled 'Programmer, Or Just A Writer?' by Ian Eveleigh. When this first appeared in September 1990 I was not in possession of sufficient knowledge to formulate a reply, but now I think I can!

There are several points in the article with which I wholeheartedly agree... it is hard work creating an appealing atmospheric story-line with a melange of puzzles... it matters not which system was used to produce the adventure provided the end result plays well and displays well on the screen... however...

I cannot agree with the statement that an adventure produced using a commercially available utility has been PROGRAMMED... it has merely been WRITTEN, DESIGNED or CREATED, whichever you prefer.

I would make a very positive distinction between the use of an in-house utility and a bought one, as at least the in-house one has been PROGRAMMED by the same people who WRITE the adventures.

Until quite recently I would have been unable to make any real comment on this subject, as my adventures (all for the Spectrum, yes a stubborn 48K rubber keyed version, nothing flash!) had been programmed, chronologically, as entirely in BASIC, a combination of BASIC and directly written machine code and latterly using my own in-house utility 'The ADVENTURE BUILDER SYSTEM'.

But, last year I used PAW to produce an adventure for the AMSTRAD 6128 and the AMSTRAD PCW Series. The mechanics of putting the adventure together were so EASY it was untrue! I can make no meaningful comment about GAC or the QUILL, but certainly PAW opened my eyes... THAT is a true example of PROGRAMMING and any adventure produced using it merely basks in its technical excellence.

Ian makes the point that he had to write his own routines for actions such as AGAIN, FOLLOW, OOPS... well I would presume that he also had to write his own routines for all of his adventure-specific verbs such as OPEN, CLOSE, UNLOCK, CLIMB etc... where is the difference?

Finally, I think Ian has got it the wrong way round when putting his money where his mouth is! In order to prove my point of view wrong I would challenge him to PROGRAM an ACCEPTABLE adventure from scratch. It can be done, but that is really hard work!

RUNNING OUT OF IDEAS

from George March, Newcastle Upon Tyne.

Excellent bit on me, from Alison York on the letters page of Issue 17 - entitled 'Something missing' - but, the ONLY 2 reasons why I haven't had much time for 'Coder' lately is...

1) I'm starting to run out of ideas (please help!).

2) But, mainly because of all the time that 2 (read 'em, TWO!) College courses at the New College Newcastle take up!

By the way, thanks for the ads in the letters page of Issue 17, but as for any details of prices, etc, there weren't any - prices that is - I was giving those games away to a good home FREE - the only thing I was asking for was maybe a bit of

help with postage!

And, as for that fake sperm donor's advert on page 14 (it was a fake wasn't it?), very comical it was!, I just hope nobody sends in any donations to them through the post - Urgh!

Also, on page 10 on number 10 of your fav' albums bit, you mentioned ex-Yes singer, Trevor Horn. Was Trev' Horn the same guy that was in a band called BUGGLES way back in the '70s, who did 'Video Killed The Radio Star'??

That 'fake' advert was genuine! I was sent it by an anonymous reader! And Trevor Horn WAS in The Buggles, who had that No. 1 single, along with keyboardist Geoff Downes, who both joined a brief line-up of Yes in 1980 - check out their 'Drama' album! Downes went on to form Asia, and Horn went on to produce Yes, Dollar, ABC, Frankie Goes To Hollywood, Inga, Pet Shop Boys, Seal, Band Aid, Grace Jones, and many more great acts!



— GNU —

by Ian Eveleigh

Eric was an Iron Maiden fan. It wasn't his fault. It was just that he, well, knew about computers. So it sort of came with the territory. Eric stared in a zombie-like fashion at his reflection amongst the mass of white hexadecimal numbers in his VDU. He couldn't understand why girls didn't want to know him. A bright intelligent lad like him. OK, so he had a few, all right, a few *too many* spots. And he had glasses that resembled jam jars. And, Eric sniffed his armpit, maybe a touch of deodorant might help. Maybe even a bath. But his image was great: the long hair, the Slayer T-shirt, the PVC-look leather jacket, the dark blue jeans (they hadn't worn out yet, so why should he replace them?) and the tired looking white-ish trainers.

But still girls didn't want to know him. Of course he had a girlfriend once. Yes, maybe she had resembled something from the movie Predator, and maybe the way his friends shouted "mooose!" every time she was seen in public suggested that she wasn't exactly an ideal choice for a cat-walk model, but he'd actually had a girlfriend. Something that he could tell his new friends about in years to come. Oh yes, Eric wasn't going to be left out of the conversation when the subject of girls came up any more. Of course, they'd had nothing in common. Which probably explains why they split up after only three dates. They never really spoke, in fact. But then again, that wasn't surprising when you consider the sheltered background the girl had had. She wasn't into modern music really. Mozart's Horn Concerto was more her style - which didn't bother Eric. He loved the theme to Colin's Sandwich.

Even his own sex didn't like him. He'd desperately tried to fit in at school. He even had his own joke. He listened to the same music as his friends, but still they didn't want to know. They'd just ask him what an RS232 really was, and then laugh cruelly when he tried to explain. He once joined a role-playing club, but discovered, much to his disappointment, that it was full of sad no-lives desperately trying to make up for their own inadequate personal lives. Eric didn't want to mix with that sort.

What he really desperately wanted to do was to hang out with all the heavy metal fans at the local pub. He'd got the image after all! But Eric didn't seem to realize that the only reason heavy metal fans can maintain that image is because most of them are unemployed (or unemployable) and therefore don't need - and can't afford - haircuts and more than one set of clothes. Eric was a little out of the ordinary there - he was about to embark on a degree course in Astro Physics. He also knew that Iron Maiden didn't really worship Satan.

In fact Eric thought the whole world hated him. This wasn't true: his parents didn't think he was that bad. The whole world didn't hate him anyway, they just thought he was an easy target. But one day, one day Eric would get his revenge on those bastards who pushed an entire set of goal posts through his letterbox.

One day Eric's hard work would pay off. He'd be a rich computer programmer. Then he'd be popular with the ladies!

But sex still eluded him. A girl actually spoke to him last weekend for what must have been, oh, at least 6 or 7 minutes. Eric was amazed. Unfortunately, by the time he'd returned from the bar with her drink (which he'd only bought with the intention of getting some change for the

condom machine) he found the girl playing tonsil-hockey with some other chap. Well how was he supposed to know she was spoken for?

But this weekend was going to be different, Eric told him self. Different altogether. Eric wasn't going to be pushed about any more. From now on he would be a forceful go-getter. From now on Eric would be a winner. Besides, this week he'd got the condoms in advance. He'd learnt his lesson, he wasn't going to leave a girl unattended again.

That night Eric entered the pub a new man. He strolled confidently over to a group of fri... people he knew.

"Hello, Smelly!" they chanted.

"It's not Smelly," said Eric, in a voice that an accountant would probably have in a particularly poor BBC sitcom. "It's Eric."

"Woooooo," replied his acquaintances.

"Look," said Eric. "I've had enough of you pushing me around. I'm not the drip you think I am."

"Prove it."

"How?"

"See that girl at the bar?"

Eric looked at possibly one of the most attractive women he'd ever seen.

"Yes," he answered.

"Ask her for a date."

Eric panicked. Sweat trickled down his arm. He couldn't do that. He simply couldn't. There was no way she would say yes.

"Well?"

You can do it, Eric told himself. After all, she could only say no. He stood up, looked at his friends, who looked back at him in mild amazement, turned, calmly pushed the stool under the table, strutted confidently up to the girl and... walked straight past her and into the toilets.

Eric heard the laughter from the pub. He'd had enough. He had to prove he was a winner. He remembered a chat-up line he'd once heard one of his incredibly successful friends use, walked back up to the bar, tapped the girl on the shoulder, looked her straight in the eye and said, "Will you sleep with me?"

"No," came the reply, without much thought.

"Why not?" asked Eric sincerely.

The girl's mouth opened, then she paused as if lost for words. Eric saw her eyes glance briefly at his friends. She smiled then said, "Yeah. Why not? Come on." She grabbed his hand and walked him out of the pub. The look on his friends' faces was a scene he wouldn't forget for a long time.

Outside, the girl led him across the road and down a secluded alleyway. She pushed him against the wall and kissed him tentatively on the lips. Blimey, thought Eric. We're actually going to do it. It! Then she stepped back and rested on the opposite wall. She undid the top button of her blouse, smiled at Eric and asked, "Are you ready?"

Eric smiled and nodded - he couldn't manage words. The girl undid another button, when... SPLASH!

Eric suddenly felt very, very wet. Laughter bellowed from behind the wall. Eric looked up at the girl, who was looking at the water dripping off his head and grinning.

Bastards.

ADAPTING ADLAN

Martin Bela

Do you like to have pictures in your adventures? I do. The only trouble is that when you have to pass through a location frequently, it can be a nuisance having to wait for the picture to load every time; so I wrote the following ADLAN routine. It will load a picture when you first enter a location, but if you re-enter the location it will merely print a message to inform you that a picture is available. If you wish to see the picture again you have to type 'DISPLAY'.

So, you've just walked into a location (with a picture) for the first time. What happens now? Well, first of all the location description is displayed, along with the exits, objects, etc. A 'PRESS ANY KEY' prompt will also be displayed, giving you time to read the text (I like to know what the picture is supposed to be of before I see it), then, after pressing a key, the picture is loaded and displayed.

After another keypress, the screen will clear and the text will be displayed again along with the exits etc. and the 'What now?' prompt.

First of all, you will have to increase the number of variables (in the OPTIONS routine) by three. The routine below uses #1, #2, and #3 but you can of course change these to suit your program.

The word DISPLAY must be added to the WORDS list.

Any location which has a picture must have variable #1 set to 1 in its LOCAL BEFORE routine. eg:-

```
r1,--r2,,<You are in a cave.>,(#1=1),();
```

If there's no picture, the LOCAL BEFORE routine can be left blank.

The line numbers at the side are for reference and should not be typed in. Similarly, the lines marked with + should already be in your program and are included here only to show where the new lines go.

The first section below should be added to the *beginning* of the BEFORE routine:

```

1# before
2
3{
4  #2=#1
5
6 if describing
7 {print<Paths lead..>
8  exits <.North.> <.South.><.East.><.West.> <Nowhere.>
9  cr cr
10 if count here
11 {print<You can see:\>
12  list here cr
13 }
14 }
15
16 if either equal #3=1 or both not been here and equal #1=1
17 {
18  if not equal #3=1
19  {print<.....PRESS ANY KEY FOR PICTURE.....>
20   key
21  }
22  if at r1 {picture<pic1.csc>}
23  if at r2 {picture<pic2.csc>}
24  #3=0
25  #1=0
26  describe
27  loop
28 }

```

The next section should be added to the *end* of the BEFORE routine:

```

29 #1=0
30 if both describing and equal #2=1
31 {print<... PICTURE AVAILABLE ...,\>}
32
33 print<What now?>
34 }

```

The next section can be added *anywhere* within the AFTER routine:

```
35  if typed disp
36    (if not equal #2=1 {print<Picture not available here> done)
37    #3=1 done
38  )
```

The function of each line is as follows:

- 1-14 This is the standard beginning of the BEFORE routine. Your routine should already look similar to this, with the exception of line 4.
- 4 Variable #2 determines whether a picture is to be shown or not.
 - If #2=1 picture to be shown
 - If #2=0 then no picture.
- 16 If you want to see the picture again, or if you've not been here before and there's a picture available, then go into.....
- 17-28the picture routine.
- 18-20 If you've not already seen the pic. then wait for a keypress, else you must have typed DISPLAY, so will show pic. immediately.
- 22-23 Loads the pictures for locations r1 and r2. You will have to extend this list for your own locations and pictures.
- 24-25 Variable #1 determines whether a pic. is available for this locat'n
 - If #1=1 picture available
 - If #1=0 no pic.
- Variable #3 has the following meaning:
 - If #3=0 Player just seen picture
 - If #3=1 Player wants to see pic. again.
- #1 is set to 0 so that the picture is not repeatedly shown.
- 26-27 Loop back to the BEFORE routine so that the text can be re-printed.
- 28 The end of this section. The rest of the BEFORE routine can follow.
- 29 #1 can be set to 0 as the picture has already been shown.
- 30 If there's a picture available *and* you've just entered this location (but *not* for the *first* time), then.....
- 31print a prompt.
- 33-34 The standard end to the BEFORE routine. Your routine should already look similar to this.
- 35 Has the player typed DISPLAY ? If so.....

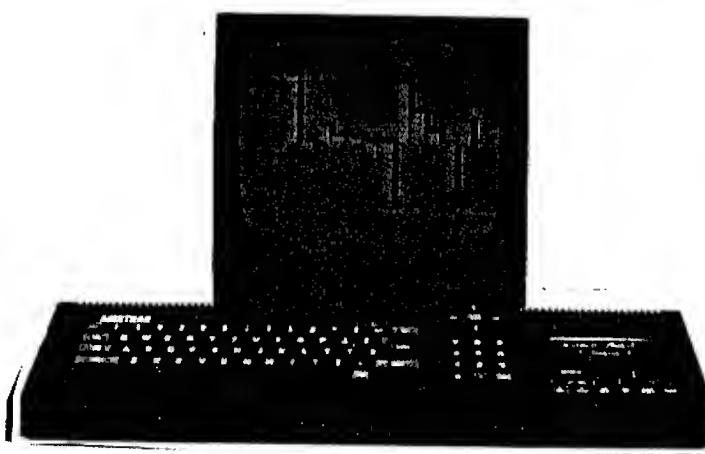
- 36check that there *is* a picture (if not, print message), then....
- 37alter #3 (see 24-25 above), and go around to start the BEFORE routine (where line 16 will detect that you want to see the picture again).
- 38 End of this (sub)routine.

If you have any queries or problems with ADLAN, then you can write to me at the address below; no need to include a sae, as I will try to answer your queries in another article (if that's okay with Chris).

Please write to:-

Martin Bela,
11, Colwell Drive,
Brookside,
Alvaston,
Derby. DE2 0UP

Now, perhaps *you* can help *me*. I'm trying to get my ADLANned game to load-in a machine-code (binary) file, but all I get is a 'wrong file type' error message. Have you managed to do this? If so would you drop me a line at the above address?Ciao for now....MB....



HANDY TIPS: Easyscript (CBM64)

by Christopher Hester

■ There's no need to use the F1 'Mode' key when selecting Enhanced or Reversed text. You can get these modes quicker using the same symbols that you see on screen. These symbols appear on the Z, X, C, and V keys, so use those instead, like this:

Keys	Symbol	Effect
CMD-Z	□	Reverse ON
CMD-X	□	Reverse OFF
CMD-C	□	Expanded ON
CMD-V	□	Expanded OFF

So instead of pressing F1 and then C to get the Expanded ON symbol, you just hold down the CMD key and press the C key. This is not only faster, but saves wondering which is the correct symbol (such as C) to press after F1, as all the four keys you require are located together from Z to V.

Note that none of the other printer codes in the manual work with the CBM64.

■ You can pan through your text on screen a lot faster than you realize! I found these two great tricks - both undocumented!!

To pan DOWN very quickly, hold down CTRL, SHIFT and A.

To pan UP very quickly, hold down CTRL and the bottom right CRSR key.

Both tricks make panning through a document much easier, as the standard cursor speed is quite slow when you've a lot of text to get through. These methods mean you can really whizz up and down the screen!

Note that there might be a slight delay before the screen moves, as the program starts panning from your current cursor position. If that is at the TOP of the screen, and you pan DOWN, there's a short delay as the cursor moves down to reach the bottom of the screen. Then watch it move!

Hold down the keys for maximum effect.

■ You can get round the annoying 'File already exists' and 'REPLACE file?' messages that appear when you save a file that you've already saved before on the same disk. Normally, the program waits until you press Y or N for YES or NO. I suppose this is a handy way to prevent you overwriting a file with the same name on the disk, or wiping your previous version of the file you're writing, incase you suddenly change your mind. However, in practise it's an irritation to have to press Y or N every time you save out your file. Instead, use the format @: (filename) whenever you save your new version of a text file. The '@:' bit tells the disk drive to overwrite your earlier version of the file named. So you might start

writing a letter and file it under the name 'bert'. When you've written a bit more, all you need to do then is call the filename 'E:bert' and the disk drive will replace 'bert' on the disk with your new version. (The 'E:' bit is not saved as part of the filename.) It's much quicker than before!

Next issue, I'll be revealing some great tips for the STAR LC10 printer, that may well also work for other 9-pin dot matrix printers as well.



ALICE

A short story by Harold Dixon.

Swirling shrouds of mist enveloped the streets that evening. There weren't many people about, and Alice felt a little uneasy in the gloomy silence especially after leaving the brightly-lit shops.

She thought she heard a脚步声, someone following! Not wanting company in this gloom, and wanting to get home as quickly as possible, she quickened her step. To her consternation the step behind began to quicken too! She walked faster - the footsteps kept pace! In alarm she stopped for a moment and looked back - icy fingers of fear ran up and down her spine as she saw down the street a weird white figure approaching eerily out of the gloom!!

She ran in panic - fear mounting as the mist seemed to get thicker before her, and she heard the footsteps behind matching her - pace for pace!!! She turned down a side-street hoping to evade her pursuer, but the figure followed, and then to her utmost dismay, a high wall loomed up ahead - it was a cul-de-sac!!!!

She turned quickly, looking for a way out, then blessedly she saw a gate set in the wall, and made for it. Suddenly she felt a sharp tug at her heel - fate had dealt a wicked blow - her thin-heeled, tightly-strapped shoe had got firmly wedged down a grating - she was trapped!!!!!

Hysteria mounted in her as she first struggled to get free scrabbling desperately at her tight shoe-straps, she glanced back to see the dreaded apparition fast approaching - it was really too much, she swooned in fright!!!!!!

A few moments later, she opened her eyes to see the white figure bent over her - she rubbed her eyes to clear her vision - thousands of horrific thoughts flashing through her mind in seconds - then she saw the object of her fear - a man in a white overall, it was Mr Wells the Chemist - she had left her purse on his counter!

How to Make a Thingy (Part III)

by Stephen Groves

So, on we go to the next section of code. This is rather longish. It starts with a routine called SETUP which designs the screen shown above. It continues with SMINV which prints the small inventory and then we get into one of the main sections of code that we will see, LOCPRN. This as you might guess is the main printing routine and as such deals with screen layout for printing, wordwrap and de-compression of text. The final pieces of code in this section will be PLOCR, TABGET, MORE, SCROLL and KEYS. All are quite small sections of code and will be explained when we get to them.

SETUP starts off by filling the top line with the border pattern. The bytes that hold this pattern are held in UDG. Following from this, we print the words INVENTORY and EXITS on the next line down. Although there is a self contained printing routine in LOCPRN, I make a call to ROM through RST 10. The reason for this, is that the attributes for INVENTORY and EXITS are different from the rest of the screen. RST 10 is the easiest way to change attributes for an isolated piece of text. The printing positions, colours and text for INVENTORY and EXITS are held in SCREEL. SETUP then continues with the border by filling in the left hand side down to row 7. It then fills in before INVENTORY, between INVENTORY and EXITS and then the right hand border. All are completed down to row 7. This then completes the top third of the screen.

The bottom two rows, (No's 8 and 9) are then completed. Row nine is filled in in the same way as row 0 at the top of the screen.

From here, SETUP goes on to print the exit direction arrows through sub-routine DIRECT and then prints the letter N for north.

The final part of SETUP deals with checking what (if any) objects are carried, and prints these under INVENTORY. I have restricted the number of objects carryable to a maximum of seven, in order that they can be printed under SMINV. Should you wish to alter this number to exceed eight, then you will not be able to use the SMINV routine without corrupting the screen. In this case, SMINV and all CALL(s) to it should be deleted from this programme.

;All registers are destroyed on exit from this routine.

SETUP	LD HL,UDG	;Load HL with the UDG for the border
	LD DE,4000H	;The screen address for the start of the border (row 0, col 0)
	CALL SETGO	;Top and bottom border printing routine
	LD HL, SCREEL	;SCREEL contains positions colour and text for INVENTORY and EXITS

SCREE2	LD A,(HL)	;Loads A with the contents of SCREE1
	CP 0FFH	;0FFH is the terminating byte of SCREE1
	JP Z,SETGO2	; When we reach the end, JP to the next part of the routine
	RST 10H	;CALL the ROM printing routine
	INC HL	;HL now points at the next byte in SCREE1
	JP SCREE2	;To continue the printing
SETGO2	LD DE,4020H	;Top byte of row 1 col 0 of screen RAM
	LD (T.BORD),DE	;Save the position to a temporary store
	CALL BORD5	;Prints the UDG down the left hand border
	LD DE,402FH	;Top byte of row 1 col 15 (before "INVENTORY")
	LD (T.BORD),DE	;Temporary store
	CALL BORD5	;Prints UDG down screen
	LD DE,4039H	;Top byte of row 1 col 25 (before "EXITS")
	LD (T.BORD),DE	;Temporary store
	CALL BORD5	;Prints UDG down screen
	LD DE,403FH	;Top byte of row 1 col 31 (right hand border)
	LD (T.BORD),DE	;Temporary store
	CALL BORD5	;Prints UDG down screen

;We now move to the middle 1/3rd of the screen. You will notice I CALL a small sub-routine BORD3 here. By doing so, it is not necessary to include LD HL,UDG before each call to print. This may only save 7 bytes, but every little helps.

LD DE,4800H	;Top byte of row 8 col 0 (left hand border)
CALL BORD3	;Prints one UDG only
LD DE,480FH	;Top byte row 8 col 15
CALL BORD3	;Prints one UDG only
LD DE,4819H	;Top byte row 8 col 25
CALL BORD3	;Prints one UDG only
LD DE,481FH	;Top byte row 8 col 31 (right hand border)
CALL BORD3	;Prints one UDG only
LD HL,UDG	;Load HL with the border UDG

LD DE,4820H ;Top byte of row 9 col 0
(bottom row of border)
CALL SETGO ;As before it prints a
complete row of UDG's

;Now we take the opportunity to set some variables for later.

SETUP6 XOR A ;Uses less memory and is
LD (COLPOS),A ;faster than LD A,0
LD (SCRCT),A ;The column position for
;The number of times that
LD (SCRCT),A ;the screen can scroll
;one line before the mess
;age "MORE..." appears.
;It starts at zero
LD A,0AH
LD (LINPOS),A ;The line position for
;printing
LD A,0CH
LD (T.SCR),A ;Storage byte that is
;loaded into SCRCT
LD A,0DH
LD (SCRLIN),A ;SCRLIN contain the number
;of lines to be scrolled
CALL DIRECT ;This prints the direction
;arrows
CALL SMINV ;This prints the small
;inventory
RET ;Returns from SETUP

SETGO LD (T.BORD),DE ;Save screen location in a
CALL BORD1 ;temporary store
LD B,7 ;The sub-routine that
;prints the border
;Using B as a counter to
;complete each character
;position

SETGO1 PUSH BC ;Saves the counter on the
LD DE,(T.BORD) ;Restores the last
;printing position
INC D ;This increases DE to
;point at the next byte in
;the current row
LD (T.BORD),DE ;Save the position again
CALL BORD0 ;To print the next byte
POP BC ;On return from printing
DJNZ SETGO1 ;the counter is restored
;Loop back if B>0

RET

BORD0	INC HL	;HL now points at the next byte of UDG
BORD1	LD B,20H	;BC as a counter. 20H is the length of one screen line
	LD A,(HL)	;Load A with the current byte of pattern
BORD2	LD (DE),A	;Put the byte onto the screen
	INC DE	;Now points to the next byte of screen RAM
	DJNZ BORD2	;Loop back if B>0
	RET	
BORD3	LD HL,UDG	;The border graphic
	CALL PRINT2	;The printing routine in LOCPRN
	RET	
BORD5	LD B,7	;Use B as a counter to print 7 UDG's down the screen.
BORD6	PUSH BC	;Save the counter on the stack
	LD HL,UDG	;The UDG design
	CALL PRINT2	;The printing routine in LOCPRN

;Rather than take up memory space with all the print positions for the border, this routine calculates the next position down the screen from the previous one. (Add 20H to any screen position and you get the same position in the next character square below, PROVIDING you stay in the same 1/3rd of the screen).

```

LD A,20H
LD DE,(T.BORD)
ADD A,E
LD E,A
LD (T.BORD),DE ;Save the new position
POP BC          ;Restore the counter
DJNZ BORD6      ;Loop back if B>0
RET

```

;We now come to the first of the TABLES described earlier. We will also start using FLAGS. EXITS contains one entry for each location. Each entry can consist of a number in the

range 0 - 255 decimal. Shown in BINARY, this is 00000000 - 11111111 . As can be seen, there are eight Binary Digits numbered from 7 to 0 reading from left to right. This is quite handy because there are also eight main compass directions ie. N, NE, E, SE, S, SW, W and NW. It is quite easy to see that you can allocate one compass direction to each Binary Digit. (Was Binary notation developed by an adventure player?) By testing each BIT of the EXIT byte, we can establish if an exit exists. A zero means that there is no exit, and a one means that there is an exit. For those of you that do not want exit arrows printed on the screen, it should be reasonably easy to adapt this code to print exits in text either at the end of a location description, or upon request by player input.

;Flags are easy to understand. They are simply known memory locations that are used either as counters, or for storing variables. Register pair IX points to FLAG\$ so that contents can be checked and altered using "IX + OFFSET". In this section of code we only use "IX+0AH" which I have designated to hold the current location number.

DIRECT	LD HL,EXITS	;To find the exit ;corresponding to the LD D,0	;current location, we ;load HL with the start of LD E,(IX+0AH)	;the exit table and then ;get the current location ADD HL,DE	;into DE. Then simply ADD ;HL,DE. HL will now point at the exit byte.
	BIT 7,(HL)		CALL NZ,DIRN		;We can now check each bit (7-0) of the exit byte in turn. If it shows an exit (non zero), we make a call to the routine to print the arrow.
	BIT 6,(HL)		CALL NZ,DIRNE		
	BIT 5,(HL)		CALL NZ,DIRE		
	BIT 4,(HL)		CALL NZ,DIRSE		
	BIT 3,(HL)		CALL NZ,DIRS		
	BIT 2,(HL)		CALL NZ,DIRSW		
	BIT 1,(HL)				

```

        CALL NZ,DIRW
        BIT 0,(HL)
        CALL NZ,DIRNW ;The final exit check
        LD A,16H      ;We now print the letter N
        RST 10H      ;in row 3, column 28 using
                      ;the ROM printing routine.
        LD A,3
        RST 10H
        LD A,1CH
        RST 10H
        LD A,4EH
        RST 10H
        RET

DIRN      PUSH HL      ;HL is saved as it points
          LD DE,40BCH  ;to the current exit
          LD HL,UDGN  ;Load DE with the screen
          JP ARROW   ;position for the current
                      ;arrow
          ;Load HL with the correct
          ;arrow UDG
          ;We now jump to print the
          ;arrow, returning direct
          ;from that routine. This
          ;again saves memory

DIRNE    PUSH HL
          LD DE,40BDH
          LD HL,UDGNE
          JP ARROW

DIRE      PUSH HL
          LD DE,40DDH
          LD HL,UDGE
          JP ARROW

DIRSE    PUSH HL
          LD DE,40FDH
          LD HL,UDGSE
          JP ARROW

```

DIRS	PUSH HL	
	LD DE, 40FCH	
	LD HL, UDG5	
	JP ARROW	
DIRSW	PUSH HL	
	LD DE, 40FBH	
	LD HL, UDG5W	
	JP ARROW	
DIRW	PUSH HL	
	LD DE, 40DBH	
	LD HL, UDGW	
	JP ARROW	
DIRNW	PUSH HL	
	LD DE, 40BBH	
	LD HL, UDGNW	
ARROW	CALL PRINT2	;A CALL straight to the printing routine
	POP HL	;Restore the EXIT byte to HL
	RET	;Return to DIRECT from where we left it and continue checking for exits
SCREE1	DEFW 0610H	;Contains the paper and ink colours, the text and the printing positions for "INVENTORY" and "EXITS".
	DEFW 0211H	
	DEFW 0116H	
	DEFW 4910H	
	DEFW 564EH	
	DEFW 4E45H	
	DEFW 4F54H	
	DEFW 5952H	
	DEFW 0116H	
	DEFW 451AH	

	DEFW 4958H
	DEFW 5354H
	DEFW 0011H
	DEFW 0FFFFH ;The terminating byte
UDG	DEFW 1818H ;The border and arrow
	DEFW 0C324H UDG's
	DEFW 0C3C3H
	DEFW 1824H
	DEFW 0
	DEFW 6020H
	DEFW 0FFFFH
	DEFW 2060H
	DEFW 3C10H
	DEFW 107EH
	DEFW 1010H
	DEFW 1010H
	DEFW 0
	DEFW 0604H
	DEFW 0FFFFH
	DEFW 0406H
	DEFW 1810H
	DEFW 1818H
	DEFW 7E18H
	DEFW 183CH
	DEFW 0E0F0H
	DEFW 0B8F0H
	DEFW 0E1CH
	DEFW 0207H
	DEFW 070FH
	DEFW 1D0FH

	DEFW 7038H	
	DEFW 40E0H	
	DEFW 0702H	
	DEFW 1C0EH	
	DEFW 0F0B8H	
	DEFW 0F0E0H	
	DEFW 0E040H	
	DEFW 3870H	
	DEFW 0F1DH	
	DEFW 0F07H	
UDGN	EQU UDG+16	
UDGNE	EQU UDG+48	
UDGE	EQU UDG+24	
UDGSE	EQU UDG+64	
UDGS	EQU UDG+32	
UDGSW	EQU UDG+56	
UDGW	EQU UDG+8	
UDGNW	EQU UDG+40	
EXITS	EQU 632EH	;The EXITS table
SCRCT	DEFB 0	;Variable used in scrolling. See SETUP6
SCRLIN	DEFB 0DH	;Variable used in scrolling. See SETUP6
T.BORD	DEFW 0	;Temporary storage for border print position
COLPOS	DEFB 0	;Contains next column position for printing
LINPOS	DEFE 0	;Contains next line position for printing
T.SCR	DEFB 0	;Storage that is used to supply SCRCT

WHITE_FUR

A short story by Mark Cantrell

A loud rhythmic booming echoed over the landscape, like the heart-beat of some gigantic creature as Snowflake huddled in the snow, quaking with fear. Lost. Crying faintly for his parents. Then a new sound disturbed the little seal, causing him to peer into the darkness and sniff the air fearfully, looking for the source of the regular crunching sound of crushed snow.

Something was coming his way, a creature shrouded in the darkness of fear. Snowflake ran, down an icy slope as the creature emitted a harsh guttural cry and increased its pace. Relentless was its pursuit but Snowflake managed to keep ahead of the thing.

Then a terrible sound ripped through the air, a cracking sound that rolled over the empty landscape. Ahead of the fleeing seal the ice cracked and split open. Snowflake slid to a halt and looked on in horror as a dark red liquid - blood - spilled over onto the ice. Spreading, it formed a steaming pool. Deeper and deeper it became until it swept up the terrified seal and carried him off across the icy wastes. Mercilessly sweeping him towards the source of his fear.

Snowflake screamed his terror as he looked up into the face of his pursuer, a shadowy form in the night sky, now lit up with a horrible red light. The creature seemed to grow before Snowflake until it blotted out the sky, until the whole world seemed to consist of that thing, then it raised a limb and brought it down swiftly to strike the terrified seal...

But the blow never connected, instead Snowflake squirmed and woke trembling from the nightmare that had been troubling him these past few days.

The bright sun bathed him in its rays, reflected from the crisp, white ice fields near the sea. Other seal pups, nearby, were huddled in the snow, blending in and only betrayed by their black eyes, like Snowflake, entrusted to the camouflage of their white fur until their parents returned.

It was another normal day in the seal colony. Quiet at that moment for most of the seals were out at sea, hunting fish. Yet not all the seals had ventured into the sea. All the youngsters were there, waiting for their parents, or playing in the snow. The former indistinct unless they happened to move, or turned their eyes in Snowflake's direction.

Elderly seals slept in the snow, or sat near the edge of the ice, staring out to sea, basking in the sun. There were younger seals present too, yearlings and twice-yearlings, moving listlessly over the snow or taking a dip in the sea. Snowflake looked at his older siblings, and as he did so he felt once more an aura of sadness emanating from them. He had once asked his mother why they should seem so sad, but she had evaded the young seal's inquisitive probing with a tense and preoccupied air.

Moving slightly to find a more comfortable position, Snowflake's gaze fell on the sea ahead, visible as a relentless mass in the near distance. Swelling up and down, sometimes battering against the edge of the ice with a great crashing sound.

Snowflake trembled. He feared the sea, but then he was scarcely a few weeks old. Eventually, he knew, he would have to venture into its uncertain depths, to forage for himself. But huddled there in the snow it seemed a terrifying prospect to delve into that unknown world. He was still daunted by the size of the white, icy world about him.

Frightened by the sea. At the same time he was curious about it. What it would be like to glide through its depths, its hidden secrets just waiting to be

discovered. The world seemed so large to Snowflake. Large, but fresh and bright. A world full of fresh experiences to be enjoyed by any young seal daring enough to look for them.

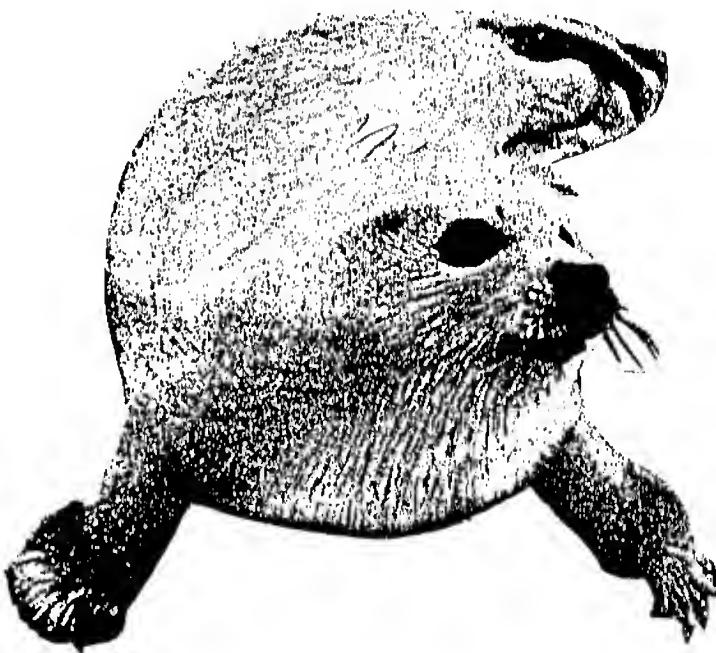
Just then a rumbling sound from the depths of Snowflake's stomach brought thoughts of food to the forefront of his mind, temporarily suppressing his mental exploration of the world. It began to snow as he peered over the ice, looking and sniffing for his mother.

Thinking now only of food, he ignored the faint buzzing noise that was carried off by the wind. He ignored the agitation amongst the older seals that this seemed to cause, and he ignored the strange smell in the air. Very faint it was, almost intangible, alien.

By now the wind was whipping up snow from the ice and blowing it across the plain, lowering visibility. Snowflake mewed softly and peered across the ice intently as he caught sight of his mother waddling across the ice, ungainly out of the water. His mother seemed agitated, even frightened as she headed towards him. Unease gripped Snowflake and he huddled even closer to the ground, dislodging some of the snow that had gathered in a small dune by his side.

Breathing hard his mother yelled to him, her words whipped away by the wind. All he caught was his name, that and the terrified tones in his mother's voice.

Rearing up on his flippers, Snowflake mewed again to his mother as she bounded up the ice slope to where he lay. As he looked about fearfully he caught sight of other figures in the snow-laden wind. Figures from his nightmares. Two-legged. Indistinct. Featureless. But moving, searching, with a determined purpose through the snow.



A terrified scream sounded above the wind as Snowflake's mother reached him and covered him with a protective flipper. "They're here..." she whispered fearfully. Staring wide-eyed at the dark figures in the snow.

Snowflake turned to stare in the direction of the screams and then shut his eyes in terrified disbelief at what he saw. One of those nightmarish figures was striking a pup as it lay helpless in the snow, crushing its head in. The pup fell silent.

A brief silence fell, broken only by the wind until a tumult of noise broke out. The helpless cries of the older seals. The mewing of frightened pups, barely heard amongst the other noises. And the harsh cries of the horrific invaders.

More of these dark figures appeared through the snow. Searching for the pups, clubbing them down where they lay. The cries and whimperings of the little seals reached Snowflake who trembled with terror. Aware of his rapidly beating heart and that of his mother.

Snowflake began to cry as a dull smacking sound reached his ears but his mother urged him into silence and rested her body across his, allowing a drift of snow to build up against their prostrate forms. Hoping to remain hidden in its cold embrace.

Snowflake froze in terror as he felt his mother tense. Crunching footsteps could be heard, making their way towards the two seals. The sounds of crunching snow stopped briefly, then continued up the slope.

Suddenly Snowflake's mother reared up and bellowed a series of desperate but terrified abuse at the monster. Hoping to warn off the creature before it caught sight of her offspring. With an anguished cry she then lunged at the creature.

A startled cry burst forth from the creature as his mother collided with it, knocking it off its feet and sending it sliding back down the slope. Snowflake's mother continued to scream abuse at the creatures as they gathered by their companion.

Snowflake looked on as one of the creatures raised a limb and pointed it at his mother. The limb spat flame and an ear-splitting crack blasted across the plain. His mother jerked and cried out in pain, blood spurted from a wound in her chest. More cracks split the air, more wounds appeared on his mother's body, staining her fur red with steaming blood.

Desperately, the old seal screamed at the creatures and pushed Snowflake down the opposing slope as two of them stalked towards her. She turned to look down at the little seal and attempted to speak through a spume of blood and saliva,

"R... un, run and hide..." she gasped, closing her eyes in pain, then she jerked once more and collapsed to the ground, sliding and rolling down the slope in a flurry of dislodged snow.

Snowflake cried in terror and grief. Whimpering, he approached his mother's still form and nuzzled her desperately, but she didn't move, tears welled up in Snowflake's eyes as he looked up the slope and saw the creatures gathered at the top.

One of the figures pointed at Snowflake's huddled form and emitted a harsh cry. Snowflake ran in terror, across the plain as two more terrible cracks split the silence. Spouts of snow erupted on either side of Snowflake as he ran blindly across the snow. But no more of those ear-splitting noises followed him as the first creature was pushed aside by the second, amidst a tirade of guttural cries.

On he ran, heart pounding, his ears filled with the cries of those nightmarish killers, oblivious to his surroundings. Only thinking of escape and survival.

But Snowflake was only a small seal, ungainly on the ice, not yet old enough to

escape into the sea. Incapable of outrunning his pursuers, his escape was impossible.

Exhausted, Snowflake slid to a halt as one of the creatures appeared before him. Others quickly appeared behind. Trapped, Snowflake huddled in the snow and began to cry. He looked up at the creature ahead of him, hazy through the tears, a pleading look on his face.

The dark creatures gathered round the little seal. The leader raised its limb and brought it down savagely against the little seal's head. Snowflake cried out in pain and looked up through a red haze.

"Why?" he cried as a second blow descended to strike the seal's skull. Another blow came, followed by another, but Snowflake was no longer capable of feeling the blows. He was no longer capable of feeling anything.

Their task complete, the creatures picked up the dead seals and disappeared into the snow like monstrous ghosts, watched by the older seals who had been helpless against the vicious onslaught. Only able to cry pitifully as their young were carried off.

The slaughter was over for another year. Had Snowflake been more fortunate he would have realised why his elder siblings always seemed so sad. It was the memory of their own early days and other visits by the dark creatures. A terror far worse than even the most ruthless predator.

But they never told the young seals why. How could they explain it to such innocents? That Jealous creatures would covet their young hides, simply because of their white fur. Tearing the skin from their dead carcasses so that these creatures could drape themselves in the fur, and convince themselves in their arrogance, that it suited them better than the pups from which it came.

Those that survived would know, and learn to dread that time of year when the dark creatures came to stalk the snows. The creatures had gone now, gone for another year. But they would be back...



SOMETHING -- FROM -- NOTHING

- by STEVE CLAY -

And now for something a little different. I take it that most people reading this are adventure writers. (I'm in trouble if they're not!). So, accepting I'm correct, have you ever drawn a blank when trying to create new puzzles? Of course you have!

Here is a little challenge! Take a mail-order catalogue of similar, (Something with lots of pictures. No not the Sun.) Randomly pick three or four pages and from each select an article.

Using the current Index catalogue I picked:

Page 111 an electric carving knife

Page 185 a bathroom cabinet

Page 202 a wall clock

Right! Now try and create a puzzle using those three items. For starters we use a bit of artistic licence. The knife now becomes a small sword with rotating blades, operated via a switch on the side. The cabinet now becomes a tall mirror-fronted closet. The clock is okay!

Here we go:

I stand in a small, dimly lit room. A clock hangs on the eastern wall. Opposite this is a full length closet with mirrored-doors. Also visible: A small sword.

X MIRROR: It is made of melodic glass! There is a small inscription at the foot of the right hand door.

READ INSCRIPTION: In tune at 1!

LOOK THROUGH MIRROR: I can only see my handsome reflection!

GET KNIFE AND X IT: I take the knife. It has a pad on the

grip. The blade gives it a savage appearance.

PRESS PAD: The blade whizzes around! All right!

X CLOCK: The fingers move!

MOVE FINGER: Hour or minute?

HOUR: Enter number 1-12!

4: Okay.

MINUTE 12: Okay. The clock chimes and then strikes: 1,2,3,4. There is a huge crash as the glass explodes. Showering the room. Something stirs from within....

A huge troll appears amid the ruins.

ATTACK TROLL: I attack with knife. Unfortunately it is low and power and does little damage. Which isn't the case with what the troll does to me.

I admit it won't win prizes and it could be greatly improved. However the fact that there is something to be improved on shows how easy it is to get something for nothing!

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